

MEETING RECORD

NAME OF GROUP: HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF MEETING: Thursday, December 15, 2005, 1:30 p.m., Conference Room 106, First Floor, County-City Building, 555 S. 10th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Tim Francis, Bruce Helwig, Jim McKee and Bob Ripley; (Jerry Berggren, Carol Walker and Terry Young absent). Ed Zimmer and and Teresa McKinstry of the Planning Department; Kris Humphrey of Public Works and Utilities; and other interested citizens.

STATED PURPOSE OF MEETING: Regular Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

Chair Bob Ripley called the meeting to order and requested a motion approving the minutes for the regular meeting held November 17, 2005. Motion for approval made by Helwig, seconded by Francis. Motion for approval carried 4-0: Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley voting 'yes'; Berggren, Walker and Young absent.

The opportunity was given for persons with limited time or with an item not appearing on the agenda to address the Commission. No one appeared.

APPLICATION BY BAHR VERMEER & HAECKER FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR WORK AT FEDERAL PLACE (ALSO KNOWN AS OLD FEDERAL BUILDING), A DESIGNATED LANDMARK AT 100 NORTH 10TH STREET
PUBLIC HEARING: December 15, 2005

Members present: Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley; Berggren, Walker and Young absent.

No one appeared. This item will be deferred to a later meeting.

**APPLICATION BY HAYDON GALLERY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
FOR WORK AT THE HARDY BUILDING, 335 N. 8TH ST., IN THE HAYMARKET
LANDMARK DISTRICT**

PUBLIC HEARING:

December 15, 2005

Members present: Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley; Berggren, Walker and Young absent.

Ed Zimmer presented a drawing for a sign that he received just prior to the meeting. This will be a temporary "open" sandwich board sign that will be taken in and out. The drawing was received from Liz Shea-McCoy.

Helwig commented that the materials being used for the sign are not listed. Zimmer noted that sandwich boards must have a specific wind resistance.

Ripley believes this business had a prior sandwich board for events.

McKee moved approval of the design with details on the materials being used to be provided, seconded by Francis. Motion carried 4-0: Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley voting 'yes'; Berggren, Walker and Young absent.

McKee made a motion that Ed Zimmer have the authority to approve the final details of the sign, if it is consistent with previous designs, seconded by Francis carried 4-0: Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley voting 'yes'; Berggren, Walker and Young absent.

**UPDATE ON DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR HARRIS OVERPASS REPLACEMENT
(SINCLAIR HILLE ARCHITECTS, SCHEMMER ASSOCIATES)**

PUBLIC HEARING:

December 15, 2005

Members present: Francis, Helwig, McKee and Ripley; Berggren, Walker and Young absent.

Andrea Bopp of Schemmer Associates appeared. A viaduct structure has existed in this location since the 1890's. It used to be made of wood and iron. Street cars used to move across the overpass. The existing structure was completed in 1955 and named in honor of John Harris. There are 28 sets of piers and 14 joints. The new structure will have half as many piers and only 2 two or three joints. The current structure is deficient and qualifies for Federal funds.

Many groups have been involved in the design process. They have had 2 public meetings regarding the construction. They are planning on a third meeting next year. They expect to have the final design in late 2006 with construction in 2007. The Mayor decided to completely close the bridge for one year. This will cut construction time in half from two years to one year. It will also save five million dollars in costs.

John Kay of Sinclair Hille Architects appeared. He stated that they have begun an initial survey based on an area of potential effect. They have defined the boundaries as "N" St. on the south, "P" on the north, 1st St. on the west and extend to 10th St. on the east. One of the issues is the bridge cross section and its current width.

Ripley wondered about archaeological issues. He questioned if there is any part of construction that might involve sub-soil or archaeological exploration. Kay replied that the Highway Archaeological Dept. and the State Historical Society require that they be notified of any visible discovery or known resource.

Footings and piers were discussed.

Kay continued that he would be surprised if they uncovered any resources that aren't already known about. McKee agreed.

Ripley requested that if anything is found, that Ed Zimmer be notified. Kay agreed.

Steve Kathol of Schemmer Associates appeared. The existing structure has 2 lanes in each direction separated by a center barrier. The separation between the overpass and the existing buildings are 24 feet on the north and 30 feet on the south. The new structure will have two lanes in each direction with a wider sidewalk. The new structure will be about four feet wider than the existing overpass. The separation between the new overpass and the buildings will be reduced to 20 feet on the north and the south will remain at about 30 feet. They would like to see the turn lane extended from the existing 150 feet to around 500 feet. This would reduce the south separation to 19 feet. Another option would be to add one more turn lane. There would be two thru lanes and two right turn only lanes. The turn lanes would only need to be about 350 feet. This would reduce the separation on the south side to less than 9 feet. They would like input on this issue.

Another issue is parking under the bridge. There are 28 piers currently. He believes 8-10 go through the Haymarket. There will be greater distance for parking. Currently, parking is head to head. A possible new configuration would be to switch the parking with a drive lane in the middle and park up against the buildings.

Helwig wondered if the pier placements could be configured differently in the Haymarket than other places. Kathol replied that cost is an issue. There will be one type of pier in the Haymarket, a 3 column pier in the railroad area and a wall type pier.

McKee wondered about the life expectancy of the new overpass. Kathol replied the design is about 70 years. They have looked at a couple of different options. Union Pacific has eliminated their tracks to the south. Burlington Northern has 3 main lines. They have talked to Union Pacific about purchasing some property from them and shortening the bridge on the

west side. In those talks, it was decided that it is substantially cheaper to extend the overpass. It is expensive for a railroad line to relocate their tracks. There is a new sanitary sewer pipe that was installed in the area.

Dan Grasso of Sinclair Hille Architects appeared to discuss aesthetics. Various designs were presented including single arches, multiple arches and a suspension bridge look. So far, there has not been a lot of support for a "signature" esthetic addition. Cost has been the main issue.

Kathol noted that the single arch could span over the railroad but added about 3.5 million dollars to the design.

Grasso continued that there has been support to do above deck piers, some type of ornamental lighting and an upgraded type guard rail.

Ripley questioned if there is any intention to provide more separation between the pedestrian and the vehicle. Kathol replied that currently the two are separated by a 2.5 foot high barrier. It is somewhat unnerving. The new barrier will be 3.5 feet tall with a railing on top. The railing will be about 1 foot, ten inches high.

Grasso talked about the character of the bridge. One approach was to treat it as a civic piece of architecture in Downtown. Other themes in Downtown appear to be a rusticated base, bronze/copper details, cut patterns and tile details. They are still working on the above deck pier design.

Ripley commented that he would like to see downlighting to the greatest extent possible. He is always concerned about random light pollution.

McKee wondered what will happen to pedestrians during construction. Kathol replied that they are working with the City Mission to possibly provide some type of shuttle.

Zimmer believes there has been concern about people crossing at grade through the railroad yards. Kris Humphrey replied that Public Works has had discussions with Burlington Northern and they will have their police watching the area.

Ripley thinks the rough cut faces add texture to the structure. He wondered if a rough surface might deter graffiti.

Bopp presented a drawing of detour routes during construction.

Grasso stated that they are looking at how to deter the pigeons. They are looking at various details and solutions to eliminate any ledges or roosts.

Ripley questioned if the structure will be steel or concrete. Kathol replied that they are taking bids on both. In terms of long term maintenance, the issues are very similar.

Ripley offered that this is absolutely a piece of civic architecture. It has caused Downtown Lincoln to stall out once you hit the railroad yards and there is no link between Downtown and West "O" Street. This stands a better possibility of linking the east and the west. He would hope that people would take a different view of what is on the west side of the overpass. He thinks the design approach is correct. He looks forward to the next presentation. He is tired of government taking the cheap route. It is time the design be integral to what we feel about our city.

Zimmer noted that in discussions to date, the advisory group talked about the more elaborate designs and were concerned about cost, but he sees some growing support for aesthetic enhancements beyond a "basic" bridge. He asked for Commission feedback on the concept that as the bridge gets closer to the buildings in the Haymarket, the character above might become simplified, so as not to compete with the buildings.

Ripley observed that he does not want to see a double right turn lane. He also thinks it would be helpful to see the configuration of the piers beneath the bridge. Some type of a drive through/fly by video would be helpful. Humphrey encouraged Ripley and the others to check out the website, www.harrisoverpass.com. There are various videos and materials available for viewing.

Zimmer noted that closing the frontage road is still a question.

Ripley is concerned about the pedestrian experience from 7th St. to 9th St. Kay would like to see the under bridge environment improved greatly. Ripley agreed.

Humphrey noted that Urban Development is working on a streetscape project on West "O". They will work together so the two projects have some cohesiveness. Ripley would like to see this as an entrance to West "O" instead of the West "O" area always feeling like they are separated from everything.

Grasso stated their unwritten goal is that people will want to walk over this bridge. They view it as connecting these two urban zones.

MISCELLANEOUS/STAFF REPORT:

Zimmer noted that there is an open house today at the Zimmer Grocery Store/Brighton Construction office at 1941 "K" St. until 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.